



Getting Started with CATalyst VP

CATalyst VP allows you to transcribe proceedings through dictation. Using CATalyst VP along with Dragon Professional software you can perform voice translation through a microphone or mask. You must be using CATalyst VP version 20 (or above) and have Dragon Professional version 15 installed on the same computer for the voice features to function properly.

The success of voice translation depends on training Dragon to recognize your speech patterns and voice. You must initially “train” the software to recognize your voice using the Dragon training feature. As you use CATalyst VP, you can continue to train Dragon, improving your recognition accuracy.

During voice translation, CATalyst VP uses the Dragon vocabulary to match words with what it hears. CATalyst VP also uses a Personal VoiceCommands dictionary to format text such as Q, A, Colloquy, etc. The Personal VoiceCommands file may also contain entries for Auto Includes, number conversion, translation commands and macros invoked by your voice, called AccelerWriters. CATalyst VP allows you to record the room noise using AudioSync.

The Dragon Professional Help provides information specific to Dragon features. While working in CATalyst VP, you can access the Dragon Naturally Speaking on-line help by selecting Help or pressing F1 while in a Dragon dialog box.

The CATalyst Help provides information specific to CATalyst VP functions and features as well as all other CATalyst functions. This includes steps on how to perform various tasks and how to use CATalyst VP features such as translate options, editing tools, customizing the Personal VoiceCommands file, job management and more. Detailed help for voice translation can be found in the CATalyst VP section of the CATalyst Help. The word “voice” precedes all keywords when searching voice translation Help topics. The general Help section contains documentation for all other CATalyst features.

CATalyst VP Hardware Guidelines

Operating System

Windows 11, Windows 10

NOTE: Windows 10 will reach its End of Support on October 14, 2025, and will no longer be receiving updates from Microsoft. This can leave your Windows 10 computer vulnerable to security attacks. Stenograph cannot guarantee the compatibility of CATalyst on Windows 10 after that date. We encourage customers to update their computers to a supported version of Windows like Windows 11 to maintain compatibility.

Speech Recognition Engine

Dragon Professional v15 or v16

Computer Processor

An Intel i5, i7, or i9 processor or AMD Ryzen 5, 7, or 9 processor.

NOTE: There is a new processor type called an ARM Processor. This processor is commonly found on Microsoft Surface Pro and newer MacBook computers. This processor is not compatible with CATalyst so be aware of what processor is on the computer before purchasing.

RAM (Memory)

16 GB of RAM or more.

Hard Drive

256 GB hard drive or larger.

Audio files, including Direct Audio files, take up the most space in CATalyst. Having enough storage on your computer is essential in keeping CATalyst and other programs running efficiently.

Audio

If you would like to record both voice audio and room audio, you will need two sound cards. Usually, voice reporters use an external sound card for the voice audio and the internal sound card for room audio.

Ports

A USB port for the writer to write Realtime, update the writer dictionary, and update the writer software.

USB-C ports are compatible but require a USB-C to USB adapter.

Other Information

Many CATalyst editing commands rely on the Function Keys (F1 - F12), especially the F4 key when inserting format symbols. Computer manufacturers have changed the default Function Keys to Activity Keys (increase/decrease volume, increase/decrease screen brightness, etc.) and this can cause these editing commands to not function. If your computer's Function Keys are Activity keys, consult your computer's documentation or contact the manufacturer for assistance on changing the Activity Keys to Function Keys.

Laptop and Desktop computers are beginning to use higher definition displays which can cause applications like CATalyst to appear blurry. If CATalyst appears blurry, the following [article](#) can help resolve this issue.

While these are the minimum requirements for CATalyst, Stenograph cannot guarantee compatibility with all makes and models of computers. We recommend asking the store or manufacturer about their return policy just in case an issue arises.

Preparing for Voice Translation

To begin voice translation, complete the following steps. For details on each step, refer to specific sections in this document and the Getting Started topic in the CATalyst VP section of the CATalyst VP Help.

Install and Train Dragon Software

To use CATalyst VP, it is necessary to install and train the Dragon software. Follow the instructions in the Dragon User's Guide to complete the following steps:

1. Install the Dragon Professional v15/v16 software using the Dragon installation instructions.
2. After the installation is complete, Dragon will walk you through the process of creating a Dragon User Profile. This involves creating a User Name, selecting your input source, configuring the volume levels, and some initial voice recognition training. The success of voice translations dependent upon training Dragon to recognize your voice. The more training you perform in Dragon, the better the translation results in CATalyst VP.

If you are recording room noise using AudioSync, use the computer's microphone jack for the AudioSync input. Connect your Dragon microphone (or mask) using an alternative input source such as a USB soundcard.

Auto-Format Text

Dragon has its own formatting options on how to handle numbers like address, phone numbers, currency, etc. These options can conflict with CATalyst's own Automatic Number Conversion, so it is recommended to choose one or the other.

To turn off Dragon's Auto-Formatting, go to **Tools, Auto-Formatting Options**. In the Auto-Formatting dialog box, uncheck *Automatically Format Text*.

Installing CATalyst VP

1. To download and install CATalyst onto your computer, refer to the following articles on the Stenograph Solution Center.

[Downloading CATalyst](#)

[Installing CATalyst](#)

2. Sample voice files are available to get your started using CATalyst VP and can be downloaded [here](#). Simply use the [Restore](#) feature in CATalyst to bring them into your user.

For more information on how to use the Sample Voice Files, open the PDF title *Sample Voice Files Document* after you have restored the files into CATalyst.

3. To familiarize yourself with CATalyst, review the Introduction section in the CATalyst Integrated Video Tutorials by clicking **Help, Integrated Video Training**.
4. If you are recording the room noise using AudioSync, be sure to accurately configure the audio input sources for both AudioSync and Dragon (see Configure Audio Settings and AudioSync Microphone Set Up and Test sections below).
5. Start a realtime file to test your translation and audio.

Configure Audio Settings

During voice translation, Dragon records your voice as you speak into the mask. Dragon records your dictation in the voice file (.DRA) using the audio settings set in Dragon. If you are also recording room noise, AudioSync records the audio file (.WAV/.OPUS) for the room noise.

When you install Dragon and create a new user, Dragon prompts you to select a dictation source for the mask input. If you are not using AudioSync, select the appropriate audio source for your microphone. If necessary, you can later change the dictation source or create multiple dictation sources. See the Dragon Professional User's Guide for information on changing or adding dictation sources.

When you are recording room noise using AudioSync, it is recommended that you use the computer's microphone jack for AudioSync input and use another input source such as a USB soundcard for your dictation microphone. With AudioSync connected to the computer's microphone jack, audio settings for the room noise are controlled through Windows. Audio settings for the voice input are controlled in Dragon. Be sure your dictation source in Dragon is set to recognize the correct audio input source. See the Dragon Professional User's Guide for information on selecting the dictation source.

When using AudioSync, test your microphone recording and playback set up for room noise along with your voice input. When the input is configured as recommended, test the room noise through Windows following the instructions in AudioSync Microphone Set Up and Test section (see below) and test the voice input following the instructions in the Dragon Naturally Speaking User's Guide. If you do not properly set up the audio settings for both room noise and dictation source, you may end up with two recordings of your voice instead of one voice audio and room noise audio.

AudioSync Microphone Set Up and Test

Before using AudioSync to record room noise, you should set up and test your microphone to ensure clear recording and playback sound. Use The following instructions to set up and test the microphone.

Configuring Windows for Audiosync

Our [Setting Up Audio](#) guide on the Solution Center will show you how to adjust your Audiosync microphone in Windows for optimal recording in CATalyst VP.

Test the Recording and Playback Levels

1. In Windows 10 and Windows 11, click the Start button and type "Voice Recorder" and press Enter.
2. Once Voice Recorder opens, click the red microphone icon to start recording. Say a few words to test the microphone, standing at different distances from the microphone.
3. When finished, click the red stop recording icon.
4. Click the play icon to playback what you just recorded.
5. Make any adjustments to your audio settings then press the red recording button to test again.
6. When satisfied with the recording levels, close Voice Recorder.